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SUBJECT: CLEARANCE FOR BAHAMIANS TO VISIT AUTEC, APRIL 19 -  
JUNE 4

1. (SBU) GCOB presented Diplomatic Note No. MFA/LAD/134 to post on March 20. Full text of Note is included in paragraph 2. U.S. Navy Atlantic Undersea Testing and Evaluation Center (AUTEC) Point of Contact, Thomas Leo, confirms that AUTEC is aware and supports the requests to provide clearance for Diane Claridge, Olivia Patterson and Edward Adderley to visit the facility located on Andros Island in The Bahamas April 19 - June 4. Post will grant clearance.

2. (SBU) Begin Text:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and has the honour to request clearance for the following Bahamian citizens to visit US naval facility NUWC detachment, AUTEC on Andros island in The Bahamas from April 19th to June 4th, 2009.

Diane Elaine Claridge  
Olivia Marguerite Patterson  
Edward Wellington Adderley

The purpose of their visit is to participate in a research program that aims to study the movements of tagged beaked whales in response to mid-frequency sonar used naval exercises at the AUTEC range and to conduct a survey for beaked whales. The AUTEC POC is Thomas Leo 561-655-2938 x 7308.

These personnel are contracted biologists with The Bahamas Marine Mammal Research Organization (BMMRO), which is one of the partners in this collaborative effort between the US Navy (NUWC), NOAA Fisheries and BMMRO. Ms. Claridge will be arriving in Fresh Creek, Andros on board the ferry from Nassau and arrangements have been made with the Program Manager to travel to AUTEC by car. Ms. Patterson and Mr. Adderley will be arriving at AUTEC aboard R/V Walton Smith, A UNOLS vessel operated by the University of Miami. Details for each person are included in the attached Visitors Request form.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America the assurances of its highest consideration.

End Text.

ZUNIGA-BROWN